1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.152-A]

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FIG. 1. Map showing extent of personal knowledge of Pygmy groups according to accounts heard *in situ* or through personal contact made during the author's 1957–1958 field trip, not covering the central and southern Congo. Circles indicate accounts of Pygmy or Pygmoid hunting bands; crosses, actual contact.

[P. 153-A]

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FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

E-4.5 (1951-1965) 1965

1: Turnbull

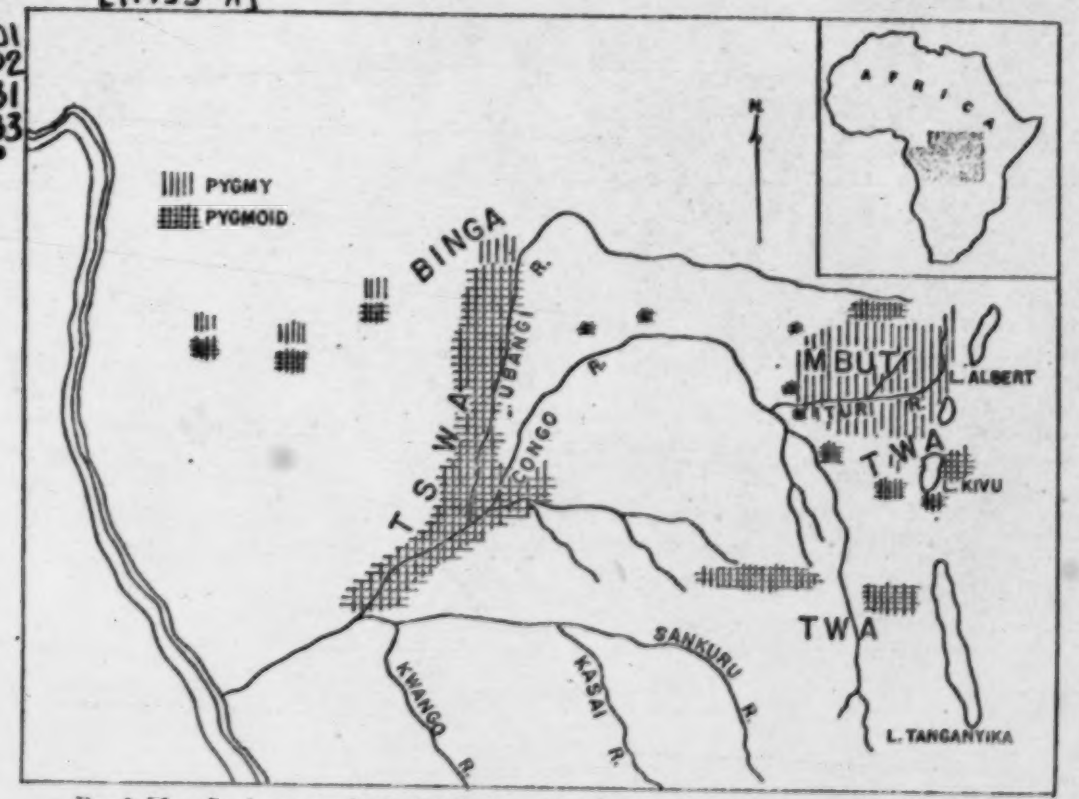

FIG. 2. Map showing approximate distribution of Pygmy and Pygmoid groups in central Africa.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133
rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182
dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166]
streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [823]
aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484]
dencies, as the Pygmy both dislikes large ex-
panses of water and lacks the knowledge of how
to bridge them. Reports of journalists and [491]
others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177]
(Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent
attempts, by both villagers and European
movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to
build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts
that the Pygmy probably never has to go more
than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132
throughout the year vary only between a low of
70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F.
during the day. The forest varies with respect 137
to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded
virgin growth, with a carpet of leaf mold be-
tween the trees. Where villagers have made a
clearing, however, there is thickly tangled
undergrowth.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.ii]

• 133
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[Frontispiece]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

pure hunting and gathering economy at work not only side by side with, but in opposition to, a cultivation economy. With the pygmoid Twa and Tswa, and possibly only excepting a few small groups in the Gabon and among the Ubangi Binga pygmies, the rest of the population of pygmy hunters and gatherers has become largely dependent for food upon cultivation, either by adopting it themselves or by entering into symbiosis with neighboring village farmers. The Mbuti solution to the contact situation is very different, and so it is in its contemporary context that we study it; any light the study may throw on an earlier form of pygmy society is incidental.

The habitat of the Mbuti is the Ituri Forest. This is a primary rain forest that runs across the equator from the fringes of the Saharan desert, in the north, into the Kivu mountains, in the south. To the east it is bounded clearly by a succession of lakes (Lake Albert, Lake Edward and Lake Kivu) but to the west the boundary is less definable, the forest thinning out as it approaches the Congo River's commercial centers. Effectively, the Mbuti occupy only the dense forest where the migration of game and the nature of vegetation have alike been virtually unaffected by outside influences. Their forest home, some 50,000 square miles in extent, is traversed by a number of roads built, for the most part, since the 1930's, but the purpose of the roads has been merely for transport and has not led to any significant exploitation of the forest, which in most places comes right to the very edge of the roadway (see Map 4).[1]

There are a number of significant features concerning the forest that have to be taken into account. In general it is considered as generous and friendly from the point of view of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and as niggardly and hostile from the point of view of the villager cultivators.

For example, the forest is, in most places, gently undulating, though even the mountainous sections in the east and in the south are as thickly wooded at their highest points as at the lowest. In all the territory to the north of the Kivu mountains the average height above sea level is somewhere around a thousand meters. This height, together with the over-all denseness of the forest, and an almost daily rainfall that averages from 70 to 80 inches per year, makes the temperatures within the forest remain remarkably constant and agreeable, seldom departing far from either side of 80° F., never below 70° or above 90°. The relative humidity is fairly constant at 95 per cent.

[1] [see page 319 -- Analysis]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 great to provide some incentive for individual effort and, much more
423 important, it also provides some incentive for a wandering member
131 of a band to return to his home territory at least once a year, for the honey season.[1]

The territory of any band is always ample for its needs. That is perhaps the safest way of defining the size of band territory. Never, in any part of the forest, have I come across any complaint of the insufficiency of a hunting territory, in terms of either size or produce. Nor are there sufficient instances of trespass to indicate that any band suffers from inadequate natural resources. In every case that I have investigated the band has been able to define its boundaries by citing rivers, streams, mountain ridges, ravines, caves, or other locally well-
131 known natural landmarks. These boundaries generally extend one
62 day's march in one direction, three days' march in the other The
423 shorter base is invariably parallel to the line, a trail or road, connect-
484 ing two villages, though it may well overlap it. A "day's march" is
487 the way the Mbuti generally define distance, and in practice this
[822] means that the first day in from the base line is the longest distance, extending perhaps as far as thirty miles. Beyond this the territory is less intensively traveled, the trails are more difficult to follow, and the third day in may represent only ten or fifteen miles. The base line, similarly, is comparatively short, being perhaps the least hunted as it is the closest to the village. Also, as the forest in this area will have been penetrated by villagers in search of building materials, it is generally much more difficult to traverse than the virgin forest a mile or so further in.

In using this measure of time and distance, the Mbuti do not think of how far a single hunter could travel in a day, but rather how far the whole band could travel, as if shifting camp. A single man could travel almost twice the distance. This is a small point, but serves as an indication of the way in which the Mbuti see the world around them, in terms of the potentiality of the whole band.

131 The territory of the Epulu band (Map 6)[A] was defined by a series
• 133 of rivers: the Harama, the Itoro, and the Epulu to the northeast, the east and the south, and by the small Nepussi and a series of hills and caves to the west. As usual, the innermost boundary was the least

[1] This also seems to be the season when bark-cloth manufacture is at its height, perhaps largely because more time is available during this season. But bark cloth is made throughout the year, and fresh sources of the best barks are always eagerly sought and claimed.

[A] [see page 321 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

clearly defined, opening northward into a large central area unclaimed by anyone.

The topography of the Epulu territory is similar to that of most other bands, though without the steep, mountainous ridges that occur slightly further east. The ground is gently undulating, as thickly forested on the hilltops as in the valleys, though the vegetation is much denser along the banks of streams and rivers. It is almost impossible to walk more than a few hundred yards without having to cross a small stream, and after a particularly violent and prolonged rainfall there are areas that become temporarily flooded and the larger streams may become uncrossable torrents. But normally there is little difficulty in traveling from one extreme of the area to another. There are no swamps, the ground is clear of the tangled undergrowth that characterizes old plantation sites, and all but the largest streams are either shallow enough, in places, to be forded or are bridged at intervals by fallen trees. Nowhere do the Mbuti need to build bridges, and nowhere do they do so except in the village context.[2] It is a simple fact that rivers that are too wide to be bridged by a fallen tree are relatively far and few between, and therefore form convenient natural boundaries. There is neither the desire nor the need to cross such rivers. A certain mistrust of large bodies of water strengthens the efficacy of rivers as boundaries, just as the few superstitions to be found among the Mbuti mostly relate to ravines, caves, streams or hills that form other boundaries.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for

[2] The famous "pygmy" bridge and the spectacular technique of crossing a river by swinging on a vine from one side to the other were taught to the Mbuti, not without difficulty, by an enterprising movie-maker. Patrick Putnam was asked to assist as interpreter, but refused. His first wife, however, went to watch the proceedings. The same group of pygmies retained some knowledge of the technique, and obligingly repeated the act for subsequent "documentary" film units. They are the only group with the knowledge, though they are now less proficient. A more recent movie-maker had to sling a wire hawser across the river and suspend the vine swing from its midpoint. A simple mathematical calculation will reveal the impossibility of the swinging technique, even disregarding the area behind the swing that would have to be cleared, a task in itself beyond Mbuti technology. Assuming the fulcrum is over one bank, and the branches into which the pygmy is to swing are directly over the far bank (a generous assumption), and assuming that the pygmy can be drawn back far enough to swing up to a 45-degree angle at the far end of his swing, the maximum width that can be crossed is three-quarters of the height of the swing. In practical experiment among the Mbuti, I found that effectively half the height of the swing was the maximum horizontal distance that could be so traversed. This would mean that to cross a river a mere hundred yards in width, the fulcrum would have to be some 600 feet up, demanding a tree approaching the height of the Eiffel Tower. Conversely, a swing of the maximum normally practicable length of 60 feet would enable a pygmy to span a stream a mere 30 feet across. Pygmies generally have rather more sense, in such matters, than movie-makers.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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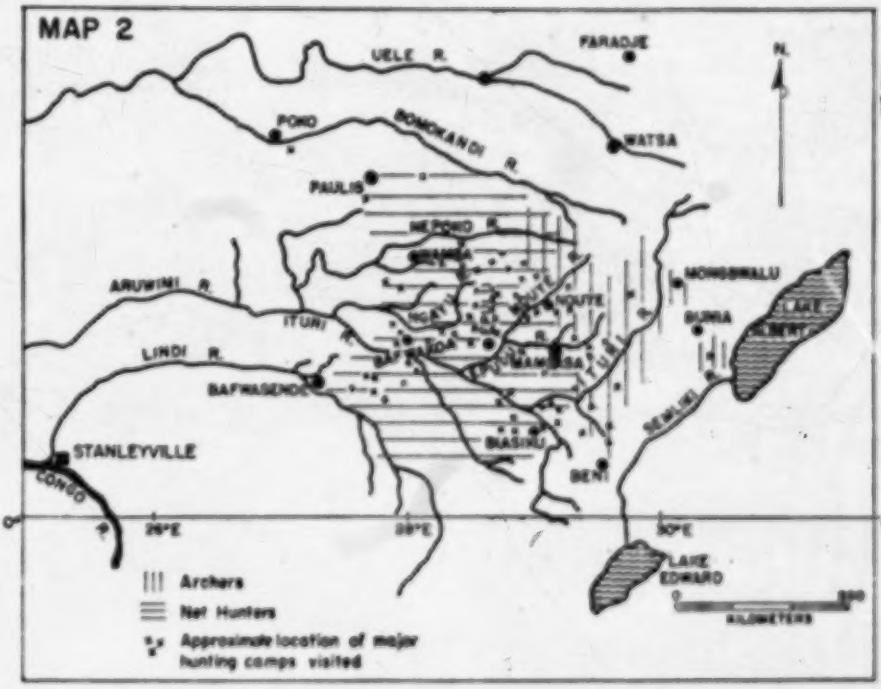
MAP I

Extent of personal knowledge of pygmy groups according to accounts heard in situ and personal contact made during 1957/8 field trip (not covering central and southern Congo)

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



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Approximate location of hunting bands visited in the Ituri.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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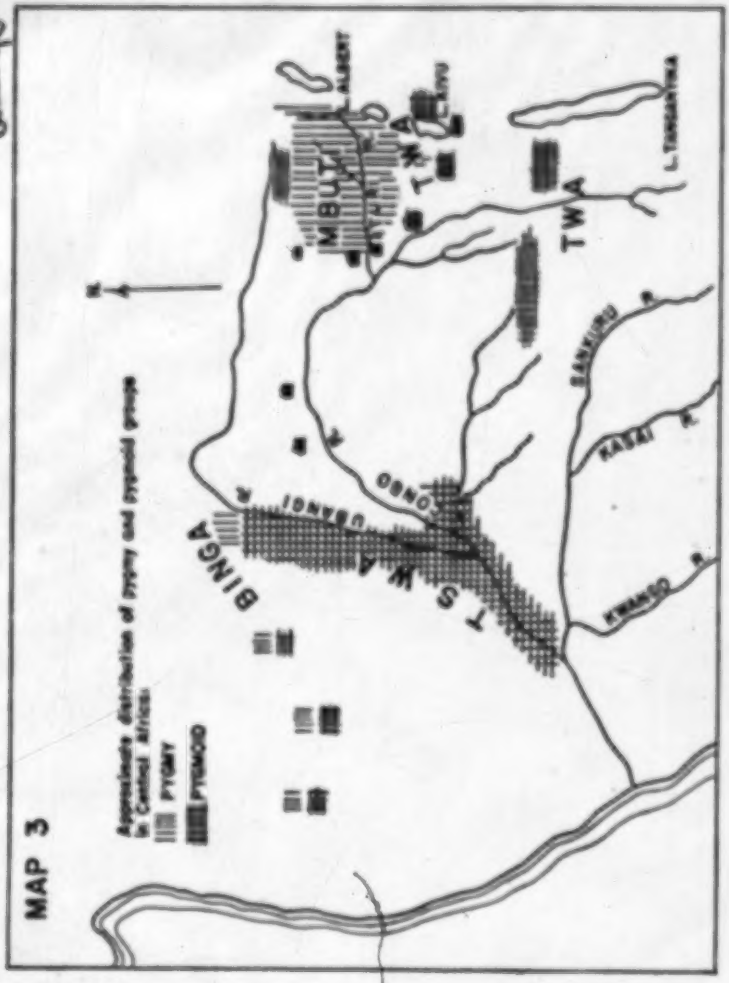
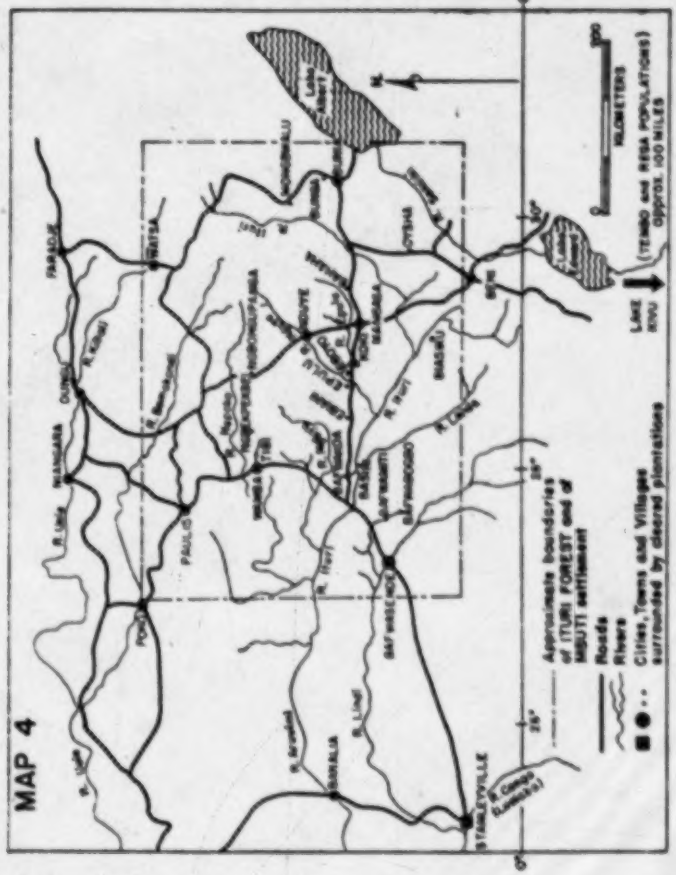


2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



Boundaries of Ituri Forest and of Mbuti settlement.

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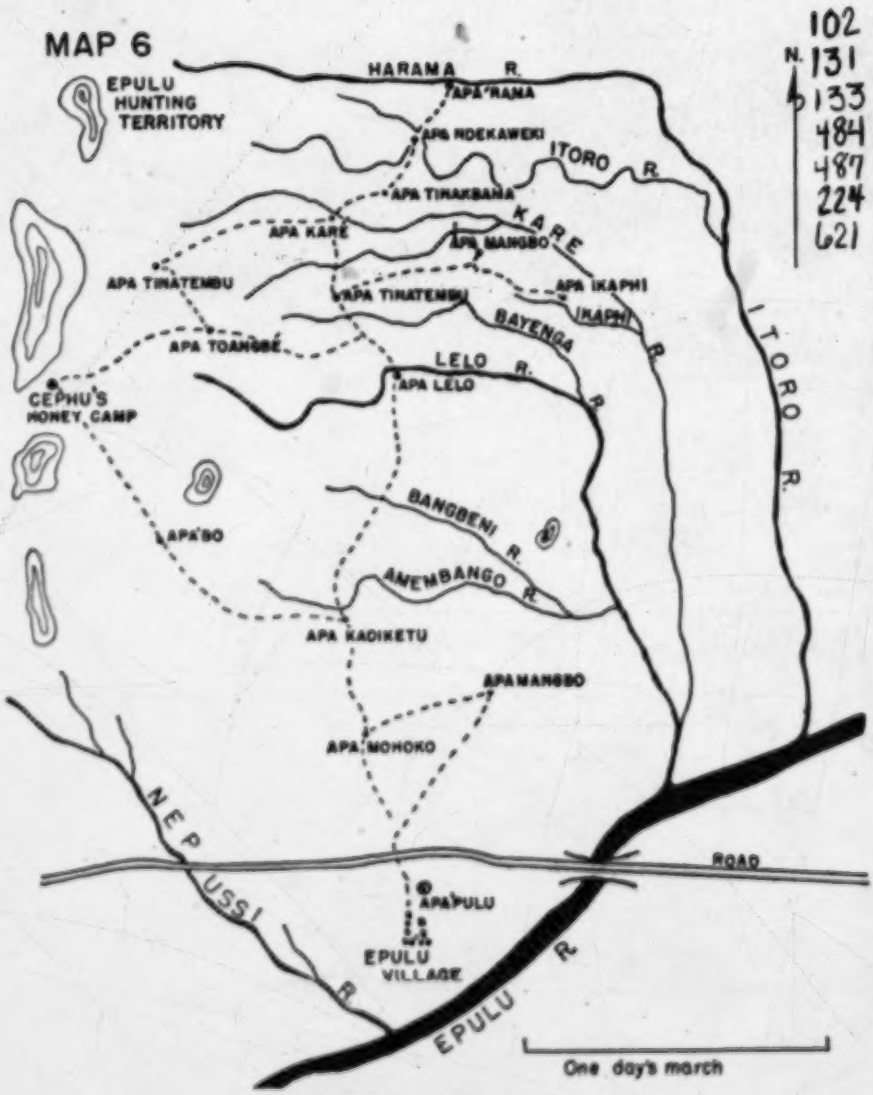
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



The Epulu hunting territory.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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MAP 1: The Eastern Province of the Congo.

*Now Republic of the Congo

[P. 10-B]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Area of Map 2
[P. 10-C]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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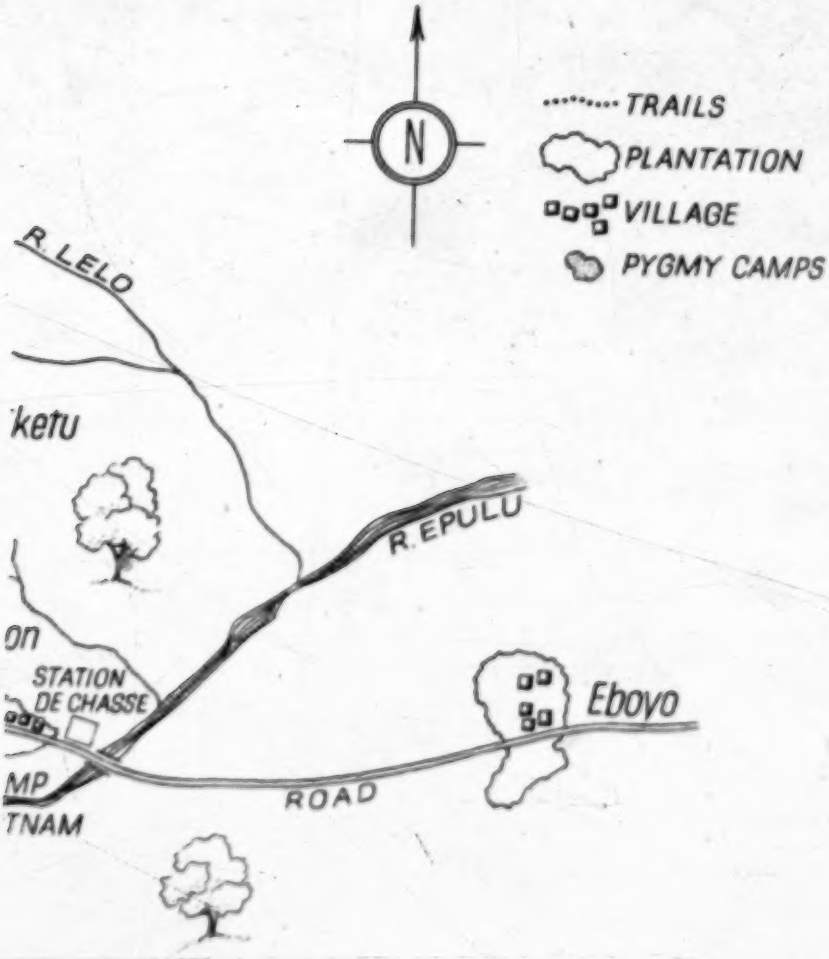
MAP 2: Detail map of the Ituri Forest, showing approximate positions of Pygmy camps, trails and plantations.
[P. 10-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



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Area of Map 3
[P. 10-E]

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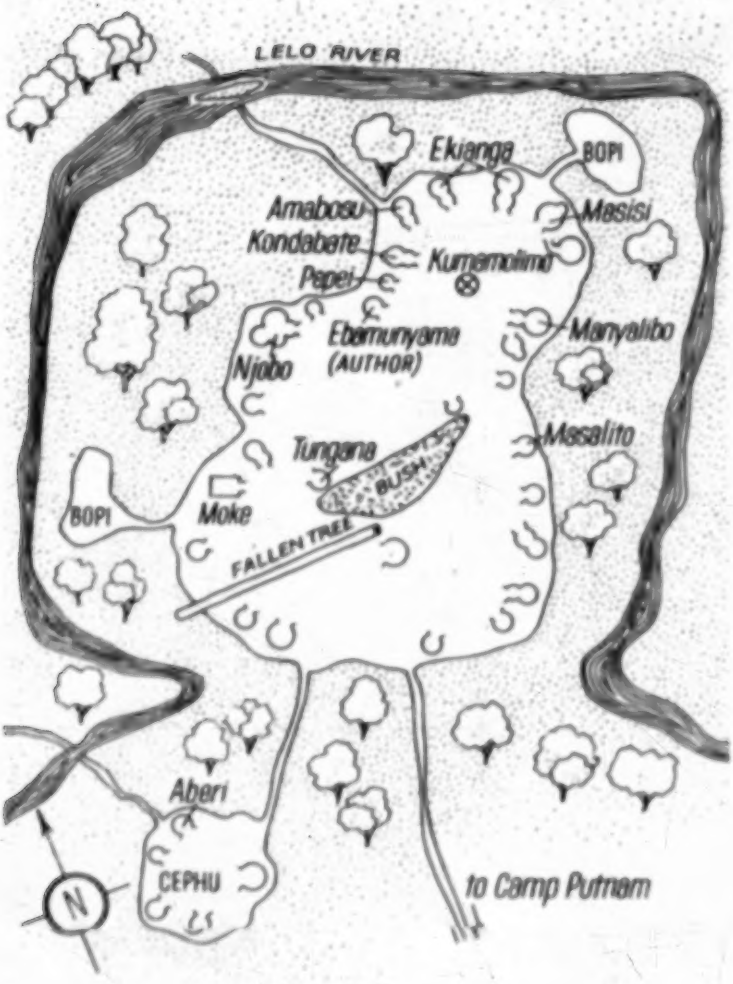

MAP 3: Apa Lelo
[P. 10-F]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the sands, beating right up to the first line of tall, waving palm trees. Then you climb gently inland to the rolling hills of Nigeria, lightly wooded in places, but for the most part open and fertile. When you cross into the Cameroons there is an abrupt change. You pass steeply up into a massive range of mountains, through a narrow but dense belt of forest, and climb still higher until you are above tree line.

The road is appalling, covered with loose stones and boulders, with a gradient as much as one in four in places, deeply scoured with gulleys made by the heavy rains pouring off the mountainside. The road twists and turns until you lose all sense of direction, but at the top there is an open, flat stretch of grassland, and at the far side of that, in the French Cameroons, you find yourself faced with a descent as uncomfortable as the climb on the British side. But here, instead of looking down on rich farmland, open and sunny, you look out over a vast sea of dense, shimmering tree tops, so dark they are almost black. On all sides this ocean of forest stretches for as far as you can see, quiet and peaceful, asking only to be left undisturbed, or at least approached in peace. But the darkness also carries a threat, a warning to outsiders that they would do well to stay away. The same darkness welcomes those who understand, and there is no feeling quite the same as the refreshing coolness of the first shadows cast by the leafy giants at the forest edge, after years away from its shade and shelter.

131 From there on, the forest stretches east and south, silent and aloof,
• 133 for thousands of miles. To the west the Atlantic is only a short distance away; to the east the forest reaches all the way to the Mountains of the Moon. It is still with you when you cross the Ubangi Chari River, possessively covering the land right down to the water's edge. On the far side of that great river there is still another thousand miles before you reach the river Aruwimi, the wide and proud tributary of the even mightier Congo. After a few hundred miles the Aruwimi becomes less wide but more tempestuous and turbulent,

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4 Mbuti

and its name changes to the Ituri. This is where the forest becomes the home of the BaMbuti, all the way through to its easternmost fringe, north as far as it is dense enough to cast its protective shade, and for unknown hundreds of miles to the south, where it is still unexplored. This was the home of the Pygmies thousands of years before Europeans thought of Africa itself as anything much more than a myth.

To be back was wonderful, but the changes at Camp Putnam were so drastic that I wondered if I had done the right thing in returning. Now that Pat was dead the name of the district had been changed to Epulu, the name of the river that ran past his old home. And more than the name was changed. A few hundred yards on, past the turning to the old village of Camp Putnam, the road crossed the river by a rickety wooden bridge. The bridge was as rickety as ever, but the forest on either side had been cut down, and backing onto what had once been Pat's estate was an ugly modern motel, built by an enterprising Belgian who hoped to attract tourists. The main attraction was that on the other side of the road the government had established a *Station de Chasse* for the capture of forest animals, particularly okapi, and for the training of forest elephants. Between these two innovations down by the bridge and the old entrance to Camp Putnam stretched the mud houses of the workers, with a few tiny African stores and an establishment proudly calling itself Hotel de Bière. The village of Camp Putnam remained unaltered. Even the old mud mansion still stood.

Not only the changed appearance of Epulu was disconcerting; so was the fact that this new community was attracting Pygmy labor, particularly since Pygmies could be paid even less than other tribes. I found that several of my old friends were working either at the Animal Station or the motel, buying their food with money at the local stores, instead of freely roaming the forest hunting and gathering for their needs. One of them, a youth called Kenge, had

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies.* three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before.

* Folkways Records: FW 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FW 4489, Music of the Ituri Forest

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

night, when it is cold, the fire gives not only warmth but protection, keeping the animals away.

It was midday when we waded through a marshy patch left by recent floods. Usually there is little marsh or swamp, but every now and again dead branches and fallen trees will block a stream and the whole area will be flooded, perhaps for miles, until a heavy rain washes the obstruction away. We had to splash knee-deep through mud and water for several hundred yards before we reached dry land. The first thing Kenge and the others did then was to find the main stream and wash themselves clean before going any farther.

From here the ground rose steadily and although we could hear streams below us we did not cross any more until just before we got to the Lelo. Up on the ridge the forest was a little thinner, more light filtered through to the ground below, and the world was alive with dancing shadows as the breeze rippled the leaves. But the sun still raised the temperature only to the point where it was pleasantly warm. As we were picking our way down into the Lelo valley we heard distant rumbles of thunder. Kenge stopped and looked up into the tree tops to see which way the wind was blowing. He muttered that it would not rain yet, but if those lazy women didn't hurry up and come and build the huts we would have a very wet night.

But for the moment the sun was shining, and when we finally arrived at the site for our camp it was bright and green and cheerful. It was a natural clearing a couple of hundred yards across, with a patch of trees and bush in the center breaking up the clearing so that it was really two. As large and as open as it was, the trees still almost met overhead. The ground, instead of being covered with leaves, was covered with a kind of grass. Kenge dumped his bundle on top of a little hillock several yards across and said that this was where we would have our house built. He then told me to come and see the Lelo itself, hinting that I should have a good bath.

Apa Lelo, or the Camp of Lelo, will always be one of the most

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1982 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

beautiful parts of the whole forest for me. This is partly because of what happened there, but also because it is one of the places where the forest is at its gentlest and kindest. Even when we left, after a month of heavy rains had turned the campsite into a morass of mud, it was still beautiful, and much as the Pygmies hate a muddy camp they were reluctant to leave. Now, however, all was still green and fresh.

Elsewhere the forest can be severe, particularly in the mountainous regions; and in many places it is overwhelming in its immensity. The leafy roof where the trees join together can be so far above that you feel as small and insignificant as the other animals roaming the ground below, depending on the forest for life. And at times it can be so powerful that it is frightening. When it whips itself into a fury, conjuring up rain and thunder and lightning, it turns small streams into raging torrents and sends heavy branches or even whole trees crashing down, some of them with trunks as thick as houses, destroying the living trees that stand in their way.

But even in a storm Apa Lelo was gentle and kind and protective. Here, somehow, one felt superior to the other animals of the forest. At the far end of the camp, just beyond the hillock where Kenge had said our house was to be built, a path led off to the left through a glade where the smell of leaf mold was rich and cool and moist. Termites built their nests there, elfin huts of clay with funny mushroom-shaped roofs; small animals scampered about below and birds fluttered lazily overhead. The world at Apa Lelo was full of delicate colors and shades and whispering sounds, and up in the highest branches orchids shyly hid their delicate heads among the moss.

This glade was almost an island, as the Lelo swept around it, all but encircling the camp. The Lelo, the river the Pygmies loved above all others, widened out at the end of its curve into a broad shallow stream, a hundred feet or so across, clear and rippling. When the water was low a bank of shingle rose in the center. In the middle

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride. He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an overclad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived—Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Manyalibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

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3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

4

The Song of the Forest

THE TRAILS WE FOLLOWED were narrow, and in places even the Pygmies had to stoop and bend. We ran at a steady pace without slowing up once. There was never any hesitating as to direction, even though there were times when it was difficult to see any trail at all. When we climbed upward we went faster because that made it easier to keep a footing. I was the only one whose feet made any noise; the others ran so lightly that they barely touched the ground but rather seemed to skim along just above it, like sylvan sprites.

After about forty-five minutes we came to a stream that was larger than the others we had crossed, though it was only a few yards wide

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and very shallow. For the first time we slowed to a walk and stepped through the bubbling water, lifting our feet high so as not to splash. The forest was silent now, except for the evening chorus of crickets and frogs, and on the far side of the stream we halted while Ausu and Makubasi looked around and listened, to reassure themselves that we were alone.

I had no idea of how far we had come or in what direction, but I knew we had left the camp far behind. It was the first time I had known a group of Pygmies to be so silent. Normally, unless hunting, they are deliberately noisy, but now, just at the time that leopards would be prowling about in search of food, they seemed unwilling to disturb the forest or the animals it concealed. Just the opposite, in fact. It was as if they were a part of the silence and the darkness of the forest itself and were only fearful lest any sound might betray their presence to some person or thing *not* of the forest.

They stood there, quiet and still, and it struck me with a sudden shock that not one of them carried a spear or bow and arrow. As they peered into the dusk and cocked their heads first on this side then on that, satisfying themselves that we were really alone, it seemed that they felt themselves so much a part of the forest and of all the living things in it that they had no need to fear anything except that which was not of the forest. One of them said to me, later, "When we are the Children of the Forest, what need have we to be afraid of it? We are only afraid of that which is outside the forest."

We stood there, water from the stream still running down our legs, until they were satisfied that all was well. Then Makubasi nodded to Madyadya and to another boy. They ran on ahead, and after a whispered discussion two others followed. The rest of us walked slowly on until we came to a small clearing nearby, the far side of which was only just visible as the last glimmer of daylight dwindled away into blackness. We stood there waiting, saying nothing. Ausu and

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed our journey at a slower pace.

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries to three large rivers which had their source not far to the northeast, spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new sound, a distant waterfall. "*Apa nde Kaweki,*" he said; "Kaweki's camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It was here that Kolongo, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris, the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before dipping down to the valley where the Itoro River flowed with a grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared, and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar.

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Itoro, just below the falls;

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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answered abruptly, "Pygmies have no right to complain." It was obviously time to go elsewhere.

On leaving Bafwakoa we headed down a little track that led to the banks of the Ituri River. Across the river lay the territory of the BoMbo and BaBali tribes, both with unsavory reputations for cannibalism, among other things. The ferry was waiting on our side of the river—a series of huge canoes, each about thirty feet long, held together by a platform lashed across the center, just wide enough and long enough to take a truck or two small cars.

The men who operated the ferry were BaNdaka, and they came lazily down to the river from their village. They climbed into the ends of their canoes and cast off, each taking hold of a long stout pole. As we drifted out, the leader took his pole and struck it on the bottom of his canoe. It sounded like a great signal drum being beaten, and the echo rolled up and down the river with the force of thunder. The other men imitated their leader, then began poling slowly across, singing and chanting. The river at that point must be nearly a mile across, thickly forested down to the water's edge on each bank. It was vast and lonely. About an hour's walk from the far side is the spot where Stanley stood and watched the confluence of the two waterways, the Ituri and the Lenda, and remarked that this was one of the most beautiful sights in the whole of the Dark Continent. We went and stood on the same spot as the sun was setting, and I felt that this indeed was the heart of Africa.

Our stay among the BoMbo and BaBali was not much more fruitful than that with Kachui from the point of view of meeting or learning anything about the local Pygmies. The chiefs, Isiaka and Lukamba, both had the same complaints to make—they simply could not control their Pygmies.

"How can we control them?" Isiaka said. "It is their forest, and they can hide from us whenever they want to. They are worthless people. They only come to the village when they want to steal."

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tall," he said, "but we call him Ebamunyama, because his father killed a buffalo, and he hunts with us in our forest."

We left early in the morning. It would have been earlier if Kenge had not found an agreeable girl to sleep with, who insisted on cooking him an elaborate breakfast. But we finally got away about an hour after sunrise and headed eastward. The ground was much more hilly than in the Epulu area, but the forest itself was much the same: tall and grand, dimly illuminated by the same filtered light. Underfoot the ground was even more clear of vegetation, as for the most part we were well above the streams and rivers. It was more rocky, and we passed a number of caves, where our guide, an elderly Pygmy with a serious face that kept breaking out into wrinkled smiles, told us that we could pass the night if we were delayed, or if his friends had gone on to another camp. I did not much fancy the idea, and on looking inside one grotto I liked it even less; it was damp, and full of rotting leaves where some earlier travelers had made themselves a bed. There was barely room to sit up, and if it rained the water would certainly have drained into the cave.

We passed several trees of a kind I had not seen before, and Kenge said he had seen them only at the extreme northern boundaries of the Epulu district. The roots climbed into the air, gigantic gnarled spirals, almost as thick as a man's body, joining the main trunk which towered above. Our guide told us that the Mabudo called this the "elephant tree," because they always took refuge in one if they were attacked by elephants. He dodged inside one to show us, hiding behind the roots. Even a Mabudo would have been able to stand upright with perfect ease. But the roots were close together, and an elephant could only get its trunk between them, he explained. And then the Mabudo sliced it off with their machettis. He imitated the action, laughing at the ridiculous picture he presented, trying to be the elephant and the Mabudo at one and the same time.

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far

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had one of our most fruitful treks of all, learning many new and important things about the forest people.

The terrain was very different from that of Epulu, being mountainous and rocky, with jagged boulders sticking out of the ground at crazy angles as though some great city had once been swallowed by an earthquake. But even on the steepest escarpments, where the huge trees seemed to grow out of the very rocks, the Pygmies moved as quickly and surely and silently as elsewhere. For the first time I saw Kenge in difficulty, he being as unused to this kind of mountaineering as I was. But we were anxious to press inward as far as we could, and once again we found ourselves almost back at the Epulu; it lay about two days to the southwest at most.

While we were in this part of the forest we heard many stories of the old wars between the various tribes of villagers, as they invaded the forest, and how the Pygmies got caught between them so that they were forced to side with one group or another.

On leaving Nduye we continued southward, past the administrative center of Mambasa, and when we had crossed the Ituri, which at this higher point was, in Kenge's words, "a mere child," we once more left the car and began walking. At the end of a day, having passed through three deserted Pygmy villages, we were beginning to feel dubious at the wisdom of having come so far without a guide when we came to the banks of a large tributary of the Ituri. There, to our mutual surprise, was one of the legendary vine bridges, slung high up over the swirling waters, suspended by lianas fastened to the topmost branches of the trees on either bank. I was glad that Kenge was amazed, because there is every reason to believe that these bridges, contrary to the information supplied by romantically minded movie-makers, are not of Pygmy origin. To cross the bridge we climbed up a series of logs leading to a fork in the tree to which our end of the bridge was anchored, and from there we made our swaying way across. Kenge refused to look down, and when I stopped in the

4c Putnam E-8 (no date) 1948 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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The Forest Environment.

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132

The Ituri forest is rolling country, so densely covered with trees that the relief of the landscape is invisible except from the air. It is a primary rain forest; that is, in most of the region it rains every day or every other day, averaging about one half of the days, from four to six in the afternoon—some 180 days a year. The annual rainfall is correspondingly great, about one and a half meters. The temperature is about 70° F. at night, and varies during the day from 75° to 80° F., depending upon whether it is sunny or cloudy. During January and February, the "dry" season, there are many overcast days; during the rest of the year it is either actually raining or else sunny, with quick changes. When the rain comes, it comes suddenly. It may be bright during the earlier part of the day, and then in the afternoon cloud up all at once in thunderheads. For a few minutes high winds rage through the trees, which tremble like grass in a breeze. Rotten branches and even huge trees crack and fall, crash-

132 ing to the ground. The lightning flashes from the somber sky, and thunder rolls and re-echoes, followed by a pelting downpour. Then in an hour or two it will suddenly stop, sometimes for a brief period of sunshine before the dark of night.

137 The forest varies greatly in regard to underbrush. In some spots there is no undergrowth at all, and nothing but leaf mold between the boles of the trees; in others there is a wild tangle of bushes, reeds, and lianas. The densest thickets are found in small patches of secondary growth, where the Negroes have made clearings and then abandoned them. Most of the forest, however, is virgin growth, and unimpeded except for fallen tree trunks.

136 137 The forest provides game enough for the pygmies, and some to spare for their hosts. Many kinds of wild plants, huge trees, small shrubs, small plants, growing low on the forest floor, bear either edible fruits or medicinal leaves or bark. Many edible fungi are abundant.

133 The forest is also well watered; the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 323-A]

[P. 322-C]

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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 323-A]

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133 rolling hills are separated by perennial streams never more than a few miles apart. A pygmy can find water almost anywhere within a hundred yards.

Negro-pygmy Relations

This forest is inhabited by two kinds of people, Negroes and pygmies, who maintain an almost symbiotic relationship, based on trade. A Negro village may own approximately 100 square miles of forest territory. In this territory are the Negro village and the pygmy village. The former is permanent, in a clearing; the latter is temporary, under the forest trees. In maintaining their relationship, it is the pygmies' job to take in honey and meat, while the Negroes' obligation is to give them plantains. In addition, the pygmies may bring in a certain amount of wild baselli fruit in season, or roofing leaves, or rattan and fibers for net making; in return they may acquire ax blades, knives, and arrowheads from the Negroes.

There is no strict process of barter involved, and no accounting kept, other than through general observation. If the pygmies are stingy, their Negroes will hold back their bananas. If the Negroes are stingy, the pygmies will leave the territory and go to live with other pygmies serving other Negro hosts.

This relationship is interfamilial, between a pygmy family and a Negro family. It is a matter of close personal relations, inherited, on both sides, from father to son. These alliances may change from time to time, but when they do there are usually hard feelings; if a man's pygmy leaves him to serve another host it is a kind of divorce. In the old days, a frequent cause of intervillage warfare among the Negroes was the luring away of each other's pygmies.